

BELMONT MILL, TOOL SHED AND LUMBER RACK  
(Nevada Belmont Mill)  
Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest  
Approximately 7 miles south of U.S. Route 50 on USDA Forest  
Service Road No. 623  
Ely vicinity  
White Pine County  
Nevada

HAER NV-46-F  
*HAER NV-46-F*

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20240-0001

## HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

### BELMONT MILL, TOOL SHED AND LUMBER RACK

HAER No. NV-46-F

Location: Approximately 7 miles south of U.S. Route 50 on USDA Forest Service Road No. 623, Ely vicinity, White Pine County, Nevada.  
U.S. Geological Survey, Seligman Canyon, Nevada, 7.5 Quadrangle (1992), Township 16 North, Range 57 East, Section 1.  
UTM Zone 11, Easting 2060859.19, Northing 14266911.77 (southeast corner of building) (NAD 83).  
Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest Feature No. F14.

Significance: The Tonopah Belmont Development Company (TBDC) was one of the most important companies created during Nevada's early twentieth-century mining boom. As ore deposits in its central Nevada mines were depleted, the company sought new claims to resurrect its fortunes. In 1926 TBDC built the Belmont Mill near Hamilton to process lead and silver ore from its recently acquired claims in the White Pine mining district of eastern Nevada. The small pilot mill employed the most recent advances in table concentration and flotation mineral processing techniques, and the company erected numerous other buildings and structures, including the tool shed and lumber rack, to support the mining and milling work. The site was largely abandoned by TBDC after a few years, but later owners used the mill and associated structures for smaller operations. Today, although most of the equipment has been removed, the Belmont Mill site is one of the only intact early twentieth-century mill complexes in eastern Nevada. As such, it is a tangible reminder of the decline and failure of a once-powerful company and, thereby, of the boom and bust cycle so common in the mining industry. The subsequent modification and reuse of the mill for small-scale operations typifies the ceaseless hum of optimism that sustains the mining industry.

Description: The tool shed and lumber rack are located immediately east of the mill (NV-46-A) and the power house (NV-46-B), and were designed and constructed by TBDC in 1926. A flat area was created between the three buildings to provide a compact and efficient yard for building and machinery maintenance and repair. The tool shed measures about 12' north to south and 15' east to west. The lumber rack, an open structure that was built against the south wall of the tool shed, measures about 17'-3" north to south and 13' east to west.

The tool shed appears to have no foundation other than large 6" x 8" sill plates set directly on the ground. The walls comprise 2" x 4" framing clad in 1" x 12" horizontal boards on the east and south walls and the west gable end; the north wall is clad in vertical corrugated metal panels. The building is open on the west side and has no doors or windows. The gable roof comprises 2" x 4" rafters nailed to 2" x 4" rafter plates and a 2" x 4" ridge beam. Ceiling joists of 2" x 12" boards span between the rafter ends. The

roof covering comprises minimal board sheathing at the ridgeline, mid-slope, and plate heights and is clad in corrugated metal. Eaves are formed by the overhanging metal panels, with exposed rafter tails on the long (north and south) walls. On the interior, walls and ceiling are unfinished and the floor is of compacted soil. A wood workbench spans most of the south wall. On the north wall, heavy timbers bolted together suggest mounts for machinery that is no longer present while a one-foot square, metal-reinforced stump near the west opening may have been a mount for an anvil.

The lumber rack was built against the south wall of the tool shed and comprises four grids of 2" x 4" uprights and 2" x 6" crosspieces running north to south; it is three bays high. Lumber was stored by lying it in the bays east to west across the crosspieces. Some lumber remains on the rack although one of the grids has collapsed and the others are in poor condition.

History: See the Narrative Overview in HAER No. NV-46 for a broad contextual history.

Based on the style of construction, the tool shed was built by TBDC in 1926; the lumber rack may have been built at the same time or added later. In photographs from ca. 1940, the location of the tool shed is obscured by a one-story, sloping, metal clad structure extending east from the mill, the purpose of which is unknown. The tool shed was a support building for the adjacent mill and power house, and its central location facilitated the maintenance and repair of both of those buildings and their all-important machinery. Today the tool shed is structurally sound but the walls and roof are in fair to poor condition, with missing boards and metal panels. The lumber rack is in poor condition and on the verge of complete collapse.

Sources: See HAER No. NV-46.

Historian: Anne Oliver, Principal, Oliver Conservation Group. Fieldwork for the project was conducted in the fall of 2010. Project documentation was accepted by HABS/HAER in 2011.

Project Information: See HAER No. NV-46 for complete details. In summary, this project was completed under a contract between the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest and a consulting team under the direction of ajc architects (Salt Lake City, Utah), in consultation with the Nevada State Historic Preservation Office. The project historian was Anne Oliver, historic preservation consultant with Oliver Conservation Group. Matt Wallace, intern architect with ajc architects, was responsible for the architectural measured drawings and completed all fieldwork and final drawings with the assistance of Oliver Smith Callis, draftsman. The photography was produced by Steve Tregeagle Photography under the direction of Steve Tregeagle and with the assistance of Heath Brown.